

Sample Lesson Plan for 9th Grade English

(115 minutes of instruction time)

A block of this length is not designed for a traditional lecture/note taking format. Therefore, each teacher must know his/her subject comprehensively, and must also be creative in the delivery of traditional information to a non-traditional audience. For example a 9th grade English class may resemble the following:

A classic short story traditionally taught to ninth graders, Richard Connell's "The Most Dangerous Game" illustrates how the man versus nature theme is taken to the extreme by an obsessed hunter of exotic game. Written during the Modern literary time period in 1924, Connell is making a social commentary about man's abuse of nature, specifically the exotic fur market created by the killing of leopards, cheetahs, and other exotic animals solely for their pelts while leaving the remainder of the animal for waste. This theme is further examined in a criticism which is in the form of a packet copied by the teacher from a series of reference books entitled *Literature and its Times*. The criticism is then read aloud by individual students in the class with a break for discussion after each paragraph to check for understanding. These particular criticisms from this series of books are written for high school level students, but as the class moves to other stories and essays, the reading level will become more sophisticated therefore the necessity for stopping and analyzing each paragraph will be an on-going part of literature study.

The story, along with all other studied short stories, essays and plays taught in the freshman year will be read aloud in class by the teacher and students. This method produces several results: teacher reading both relaxes and entertains the students while increasing their level of engagement, and student reading allows for oral reading practice, and easy observation of comprehension and skill level. Reading selected works in class also ensures that the students are exposed to the literature and the teacher may check as often as necessary for plot-related questions. The 115 minutes and a maximum of 14 students per class allows for on-going individualized help for each student as needed.

After the story and criticism are read and plot questions are answered, the students will have 15-20 minutes to think and work on their own to develop and write one or two potential thesis statements that apply one of the themes of this story and/or to some aspect of today's society. The students will use information from both the short story and the criticism. This alternate assessment to a standard quiz will allow the students to apply the knowledge they have just acquired and give them practice with writing strong thesis statements.

The students will then come back together as a group and read each thesis statement aloud. The class as a whole, led by the teacher, will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each thesis statement giving each student the ability to fix and change any weaknesses. [Note: the teacher will have spent necessary time at the beginning of the year creating a non-threatening and supportive environment for students to feel

comfortable, not vulnerable, sharing their work.] All of their work will be stored on their laptops so that it is always accessible every day, throughout the day. Students would each receive a completion grade their thesis statement this time. The next step in the process of writing this paper for the student is to create 3-5 supporting sentences for the thesis statement. This may be done at the end of this period if there is time. At the completion of this particular assignment, students send their work electronically to the teacher who reviews them and assesses them as a quiz grade.

With the remainder of the class period and into the next, the teacher and the class will analyze how to tie this story into the current interdisciplinary project assigned to all students. See page 18 in application for full description of an interdisciplinary project based on the problem-based method. Some students may choose to include analysis of “The Most Dangerous Game” in their final project or they may choose one of the other works studied in English class or an approved selection of particular interest. This will allow for individualization of each student’s project so as to best reflect his or her ability and creativity.

A virtual Friday assignment for this particular story would be for the students define the list of vocabulary words found in the story which the class would create by adding to a list that they would put on the class website. Each student would then create a dialogue between two or more people using at least 10 words from their created list. This assignment would be graded as a test grade since they will not only be graded on the correct usage of the vocabulary words, but also on the correct usage of quotations, commas, and capitalization in the writing of correct dialogue form. Students may also use this time to expand their thesis statement and supporting points into a rough draft for their essay on “The Most Dangerous Game.”